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ABSTRACT

Intended for adult educators, this book is a comprehensive overview and synthesis of what is known about adult learning. Part 1 describes the context of learning. Chapters 1-4 describe the following: the sociocultural context; the range of settings and ways they influence learners and the learning process; literature on who participates in formal adult learning, and why and what they choose to learn; and questions of access and opportunity. Part 2 focuses on adults' developmental characteristics. Chapters 5-8 review biological, psychological, sociocultural, and integrated perspectives on adult development; cognitive development in adults; and research on intelligence. Part 3 explores components of the learning process. Chapters 9-11 focus on these topics: memory and cognition, and how brain structures and functioning affect learning; role of experience in learning; and five traditional theories about learning and their implications for adult learning. Part 4 focuses on the learning transaction with adults. Chapters 12-15 discuss the following: Knowles's (1980) concept of andragogy and four other models of adult learning; self-directed learning; development of transitional learning and unresolved issues inherent in this approach; and three perspectives that focus on power relations in the learning transaction: critical theory, postmodernism, and feminist theory. Part 5 (chapters 16-17) addresses ethical issues and presents a synthesis of the adult learning literature. (The book contains 972 references and name and subject indexes.) (YLB)

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